

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 IO-10

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 /061 W

----- 089685

O 081355Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9799

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 9110

FOLLOWING REPEAT BOMBAY 1687 SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO
CALCUTTA / MADRAS. DTD 8 JUL 75

QUOTE:

BOMBAY 1687

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT IN

SUBJ: POLITICAL SITUATION IN WESTERN INDIA

1. AS FAR AS THIS REGION IS CONCERNED, MRS GANDHI APPEARS TO HAVE IT MADE AND NOT VERY MUCH TO WORRY ABOUT. SHE'S PULLED IT OFF WITH HARDLY A RIPPLE OR WHIMPER. FROM ALL INDICATIONS, GUJARAT'S JANATA FRONT GOVERNMENT IS TRYING ITS BEST TO AVOID GIVING THE CENTRE ANY OPENING TO REIMPOSE PRESIDENT'S RULE. ELSEWHERE OPPOSITION ELEMENTS HAVE DISAPPEARED FROM VIEW AND THERE IS NOTHING TO SUGGEST THAT ANY PLANS TO CHALLENGE HER TAKEOVER IN THE NEAR TERM ARE BEING CONTEMPLATED. THE MOST SURPRISING FEATURE OF THE LOCAL SCENE IS PERHAPS THE SPEED WITH WHICH MOST HAVE ADJUSTED TO THE NEW SITUATION AND AS FAR AS BOMBAY'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED TO PERCEIVE DISTINCT ADVANTAGES IN IT TO THEM IN THE SHORT TERM AT LEAST.

2. ARRESTS IN THE REGION OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS HAVE BEEN LARGELY CONCENTRATED ON THE RSS AND THIS HAS NOT BEEN VIEWED
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WITH DISFAVOR BY MANY LOCALLY. SINCE THE BANNING OF EXTREMIST

ORGANIZATIONS, GUJARAT HAS ARRESTED 78 UNDER DIR (INCLUDING 60 RSS) AND 74 UNDER CRIMINAL PROCEDURES CODE, BUT NONE UNDER MISA THUS FAR. IN MAHARASHTRA, TODAY'S PUBLISHED FIGURES FOR ARRESTS GIVE STATEWIDE TOTALS THUS FAR OF 541 UNDER MISA, 193 UNDER DIR AND 447 UNDER CRIMINAL PROCEDURES CODE. WHILE WE HAVE NOTED SOME DISCREPANCIES IN PUBLISHED FIGURES, IT APPEARS THAT NEARLY 1200 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO CUSTODY IN MAHARASHTRA WHICH IS QUITE A NUMBER FOR THIS RULING CONGRESS STRONGHOLD.

3. LOCAL PRESS THIS MORNING CARRIES

NEW DELHI DATELINE STORY

ON SEIZURE OF RSS ARMS INCLUDING 25 TWELVE-GAUGE SHELLS "WITH US MARKINGS" AMONG THEM. TIMES OF INDIA HEADLINED AND FRONTPAGED THE LATTER WHICH SUGGESTS SOMETHING ABOUT ITS OBJECTIVITY THESE DAYS.

4. CENSORSHIP REMAINS TIGHT. THE HERALD TRIBUNE CONTINUES BANNED AND TIME AND NEWSWEEK IMPOUNDED. TIMES, WE ARE TOLD, CAN NOW BE PURCHASED ILLICITLY LOCALLY FOR RUPEES 30. INDIANS RECEIVING US PUBLICATIONS FIND THAT THEY HAVE BEEN CENSORED, LAXMAN RESUMED HIS CARTOONS IN THE TIMES OF INDIA YESTERDAY, BUT IT OBVIOUS THAT HE HAS GOTTEN THE MESSAGE AND THAT HE IS NOW WORKING FOR THE GOI. IN FACT, MOST PEOPLE HAVE GOTTEN THE MESSAGE AND FEW REALLY WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE SITUATION AND PARTICULARLY TO US. SOME OF THE EDITORIALS THE PAST COUPLE OF DAYS HAVE VENTURED RESERVATIONS ABOUT SOME OF THE ECONOMIC MEASURES SUCH AS THE RURAL BANKS. IT MAY BE THAT THE CENSORS WILL PERMIT SOME LATITUDE FOR COMMENT IN THIS AREA.

5. WE ARE TOLD BY A RELIABLE SOURCE THAT BPCC PRESIDENT RAJNI PATEL WHO PROTEGE MRS GANDHI, HAS WITH EXCEPTION COUPLE OF DAYS, BEEN IN DELHI AT MRS GANDHI'S REQUEST SINCE JUNE 11. SAME SOURCE STATES THAT HE, BAROOAH AND CHIEF MIN RAY ARE HER THREE PRINCIPAL ADVISORS AT PRESENT. SOURCE THINKS RAJNI PATEL WOULD LIKELY BECOME MEMBER CENTRAL CABINET IN ANY RESHUFFLE ALTHOUGH HE STATES RAJNI HAS RESISTED PRIOR ATTEMPTS BY MRS GANDHI TO DO SO.

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